



BADCOG NEWS.

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President: Richard Hobbs

Chairman: Ernest Hoyos, Sunny Cottage,
Buckenham Woods, Lingwood

Norwich NR13 4HG.

Tel 01603 712913

www.badcog.co.uk



Words of the countryside

Did you know that a 'smeuse' is the gap in the base of a hedge made by the regular passage of a small animal?

Robert Macfarlen has long been fascinated by vernacular word lists and was dismayed when some words were, "No longer felt relevant to a modern day childhood," and Oxford University Press removed them for their Junior Dictionary. A few of these were adder, ash, beech, bluebell, buttercup, catkin, conker, cowslip, dandelion, fern, hazel, heather, ivy, kingfisher, mistletoe, nectar, newt, otter, pasture and willow. In their place went the likes of blog, celebrity, chatroom and voicemail.

Spurred on by these deletions Robert began word-collecting, initially on the Isle of Lewis where he discovered the book 'A Peat Glossary' full of moorland terms one of which is a 'caochan' meaning a slender mountain stream obscured by vegetation such that it is virtually hidden from sight. With a fascination about the relationship of language and landscape Robert has travelled widely in Britain and Ireland word collecting and he lists them under various headings in his book entitled 'Landmarks'.

Some East Anglian words in the section on ice and snow include 'billow' for a snowdrift, and 'strivven' meaning become filled with blown or drifted snow. Associated with woodlands are 'biests' which are wen-like protuberances on growing trees; 'tod' meaning a stump of a tree sawn off and left in the ground or, in Suffolk, the top of a pollard. A newly hatched featherless bird is a 'barbublin'.

Very specific on Lewis is the word 'eit', the practice of placing quartz stones in streams so that they sparkle in moonlight and thereby attract salmon to them in late summer and autumn.

Nan Shepperd, another word hoarder, has 'spranin' for walking

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vigorously, 'smoored' for smothered in snow, and 'roarie bumblers' for fast moving storm clouds. A painter in the Western Isles used 'landskein' to describe the braid of blue horizon lines on a hazy day. A child said that the soft seeds of grasses pinched between fingertips were 'honey fur'.

Others descriptive terms are 'squilving ground', land which slants towards the sea at the edge of a cliff; 'shirr' a ruffle or ripple on water and in Suffolk 'nab' is a summit of a hill while 'Aggy-jaggers' on the north Kent coast refers to mist forming along the sea edge.

Early Purple Orchids

Often arriving with the bluebell, the flowers of this early orchid make a handsome sight in spring. The classic colour is magenta however occasionally white and pale pink flower spikes can be found. The leaves are shiny with dark purple blotches. When first in bloom it has a wonderful scent, not dissimilar to Lily-of-the-valley tinged with blackcurrant but as the flowers fade, it starts to reek! As its name suggests, this is one of the first orchids to bloom, only the Early Spider-orchid flowers earlier.

This year there was a particularly good display in Burlingham Woods. They are often nibbled by deer or rabbits but this year they were spared, or at least they were at the time of my visit.

It adapts to a variety of habitats and can be found in hay meadows, woodland and often on roadside verges. It occurs mostly on non-acidic soils and is also found in ancient woodland (especially coppice), chalk downland, grassy banks, limestone pavements and cliff-top grassland. It is widely distributed across the UK and Ireland.

The Early Purple Orchid was once a common plant, found in a variety of habitats. Sadly, these have also been places where urban development and modern farming methods have taken their toll. Although it is still found at sites throughout the UK it is by no means as abundant as it once was.

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There is a dizzying array of local names for the Early Purple Orchid. These include adder's meat, bloody butchers, red butchers, goosey ganders, kecklegs, kettle cases and kite's legs.

The legend that Early Purple Orchid grew under Christ's cross, and the leaves were splattered with the blood of Christ, have resulted in the names Gethesmane and cross flower.



The dried tubers have been used to make a drink called Saloop or Salep by grinding them into flour, and mixing with hot milk or water, honey and spices. This was popular in the nineteenth century among manual workers probably owing to wholesome and strengthening qualities. It probably originated from the similar Middle Eastern drink, *sahleb*.

In the quote below, the Early Purple Orchid is the "long purple" of Ophelia's garland, as referred to by Gertrude in Shakespeare's Hamlet.

Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples, that liberal shepards give a grosser name, but which cold maids do Dead Men's Fingers call

Avocets in Norfolk

1820s. They vanished from Norfolk

1840. They became extinct in the UK following habitat loss, egg collection, shooting for the plumage industry.

WWII. Beaches flooded along E. Anglia coast to deter beach invasion. Public access restricted including at Minsmere.

1947. 4 pairs bred at Minsmere. The site became a reserve.

1955. The Avocet appeared on the RSPB tie as a symbol of conservation success.

1963. A new scrape installed at Minsmere. Avocets breed and return each year.

1970. 125 juveniles ringed at Minsmere.

2020. Around 1,500 pairs breed annually in the UK with up to 70 breeding pairs at Minsmere.

50,000 mile cuckoo

A cuckoo named PJ was fitted with a satellite tag in June 2016 at King's Forest, Suffolk as part of a project led by the British Trust for Ornithology.

With PJ's fifth migratory flight to Africa and back now completed the tag has recorded a record mileage in those 5 years of more than 50,000 miles.

This includes crossing the Sahara desert 10 times, making many sea crossings and navigating the Atlas mountains in Morocco and the Pyrenees in France and Spain.

With PJ back in Suffolk this spring scientists are better able to understand the life of a declining bird species.

Satellite-tagged cuckoos can be tracked on bto.org/cuckoos.



Release planned for sea eagles in Norfolk

For the first time in 200 years sea eagles are to be released in England. Over the next 10 years it is planned to release 60 birds at Ken Hill Farm near Sandringham.

Persecution had caused their extinction in Britain by the early 20th century.



These birds with a two meter wing span, also known as white tailed eagles, were re-introduced to Scotland from the 1970s and to the Isle of Wight in 2019. Six of the Isle of Wight birds have spent time in Norfolk in the past year but without help it would take a long time for the species to increase its population and re-colonise East Anglia.

The aim is to establish a small breeding population of about 6 – 10 pairs . This will take some time as these eagles do not usually breed until they are 5 years old.

About swifts

Nesting in high roof crevices the female swift lays 2 or 3 eggs. The blind and naked chicks hatch after 19 or 20 days and are brooded continuously for the first week. (Staying in the nest from naked hatchling to feathered fledging is typical of many bird groups, including songbirds, pigeons and raptors. These species are termed 'altricial').

The youngsters start moving around at 2 to 3 weeks and exercising to strengthen their wings. Food balls of compacted aerial insects are delivered by the parents. Whilst the adults are on foraging trips the young may be left for days at a time. Very unusually these chicks can survive by entering a state of torpor when the metabolism slows down allowing them to survive without food.



On fledging at about 6 weeks old the chicks are on their own, their parents having already gone. Climbing out of the nest the youngsters take straight to the air to join other fledglings and practice their flying for a few days. By mid August they turn south and head off for their first migration to Africa.

If a fledgling crash-lands it will need help. This is one species where help is encouraged. It will not survive without intervention.

You can find out how to help at swift-conservation.org

A 'tern' in the right direction.

Numbers of breeding little terns at Blakeney in the summer of 2020 were the highest in 25 years. 154 pairs fledged 201 chicks. However, a national decline has been seen since the 1980s with fewer than 2,000 pairs left in the UK.

A plea for copy

As commissioning editor for the News Letter I am always pleased to receive snippets or articles of interest including photos separately. I am conscious that Tony McKie does a marvellous job jig-sawing it all together so the more material he has the easier the task. So please keep them coming!

Report following All Saints Church, Hemblington
Love your Burial Ground week
5th – 13th June, 2021

The Friends of All Saints Church, Hemblington, took part in the national Caring for God's Acre "Love your Burial Ground week", organising two formal survey sessions in the churchyard (Saturdays 5th and 12th June (10:00-12:00)), a Zoom meeting on "Birdwatching in Norfolk", exhibitions in church and a presentation on "Butterflies of Norfolk". Arrangements were also made for children from the local school to visit the churchyard. As national Covid-19 restrictions were still in place, care was taken to ensure volunteers and visitors understood and abided by health and safety regulations.

i) Surveying and recording wildlife: overview of wildlife seen in, over and around the churchyard :

Bees	7 species
Birds	32 species
Butterflies	2 species
Dragonflies	1 species
Mammals	Evidence of moles
Moths	31 species

ii) Exhibitions in church: the main exhibition was offered by the Blofield & District Conservation Group (BADCOG), with photographs of work parties at local churchyards and nature reserves and of birds, moths and butterflies. This group also organised a moth trap overnight before a visit by local schoolchildren the next day.

A secondary exhibition illustrated the wild flora and fauna identified in the churchyard over previous years, with photographs, and the management plan for the area. Various reference books and charts were also available to visitors, plus a request for people to note anything they saw during their visit.

iii) Visit by children from Hemblington Primary School: the children had the opportunity to explore the churchyard, learn something of the wildlife found there, and how it is managed. They also studied the outside of the church building, discovering the different materials used in its construction.

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Of particular interest to the children was a moth trap which had been left overnight in the churchyard. They were fascinated, both by how it worked and the moths which were found in it. We are indebted to Tony Mckie from BADCOG for setting it up. Many of the children tried their hand at making bark and leaf rubbings, drawing plants and making a cross from twigs. All planted a sunflower seed to take home. Hopefully these will eventually be planted in their own gardens to help encourage wildlife there. (Report by Jennifer Harvey.)



iv) Formal presentations by David Bryant: this local author and naturalist kindly offered a Zoom presentation in advance of the week entitled “Birdwatching in Norfolk – where to go and what to see”. He also organised a talk and PowerPoint presentation in church on Saturday, 13th June entitled “Butterflies of Norfolk”.

The Friends group is very grateful to those who volunteered in wildlife identification during the surveys, ensured Covid-19 regulations were adhered to, and especially to David Bryant for his formal presentations and Tony Mckie of BADCOG for organising the moth trapping session and the exhibition stands in church. The detailed reports will be sent to the Caring for God’s Acre group and Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

Monthly wildlife surveys are undertaken – the list of dates is available in the church porch. All are very welcome to join in with these.

(Susan Rowe – Secretary – The Friends of All Saints Church, Hemblington)



Main Work Party Report

Apr 24th – Holly Lane Pond – Scythed banks – coppiced some hazel and willow – light trim of main hedge- general tidy up plus litter pick. All cut vegetation raked and cleared to spoil heap.

May 15th – Jary's Meadow – All areas cut on May 10th raked and cleared to fire sites. A fallen poplar branch was cut up.

May 22th – Walsham Fen – All vegetation cut on May 18th raked and cleared to spoil heaps. Replaced 6 damaged slats along boardwalk.

Jun 05th – Buckenham Woods – The bank steps area/ around the seat in open area/a $\frac{3}{4}$ metre strip either side of main path and causeway path, all mown raked and cleared to fire sites /spoil heaps. Overhanging vegetation on causeway path cut back. Some sycamore cut back and treated with weed killer. Some oak and hornbeam saved and protective guards fitted. Obstructing vegetation on footpath from Buckenham Rd by allotments to woods, cut back.

Jun 19th – Hemblington Church – Conservation area mown on Jun 14th raked and cleared to spoil heap.

Additional Work Party Reports

May 10th – Jary's Meadow – Path network and around bramble area in centre of meadow, mown.

May 18th – Walsham Fen – The top and a 1.5metre strip both sides of the boardwalk mown

Jun 14th – Hemblington Church – Conservation area mown.

Jun 15th—Lingwood Pond—One meter strip on east side of pond mowed, along with high vegetation on north side of pond and west side verge.

BADCOG Work Party Dates

3rd July—Howes Meadow

17th July—Blofield Church

20th July—Blofield Church with Green Gym

31st July—Walsham Fen

14th August—Jary's Meadow

28th August—Howes Meadow

Work parties start at 10.30am and finish at about 1pm.

All welcome!